



NAVAJO TRIBAL UTILITY AUTHORITY

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For Immediate Release

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NTUA CONTINUES MONITORING WATER SITUATION

Fort Defiance, AZ. – The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority is working closely with the Navajo Nation, State and Federal agencies regarding the water waste spill from the suspended Gold King mine in southwest Colorado. Like other northern New Mexico communities, NTUA was notified that an estimated 1 million gallons of mine waste was released into the Animas River, which is a tributary to the San Juan River.

Since the notification, NTUA has remained in close contact with monitoring agencies, including the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Officials emphasize that there is no threat to the drinking water from the spill – that includes the NTUA water system in the northern New Mexico part of the Navajo Nation.

According to NTUA Deputy General Manager Rex Kontz, the NTUA water system from Farmington to Beclabito is not impacted. He said all NTUA water systems along that route are fed from a different system isolated from the San Juan River. This alternate system is also part of another larger water storage system. Authorities estimate that the water system storage amount is expected to contain 45 days of water.

However, as a precautionary measure, NTUA has shut down the water treatment facility in Mexican Hat, Utah that provides service to small community of Halchita, Utah. It will remain shut down until NTUA receives a notice from monitoring agencies. The Water Treatment facility pulls and treats water from the San Juan River. Because of the spill incident, NTUA immediately shut down the facility until further notice. In the meantime, the NTUA Kayenta District is refilling the community water tank. Customers are asked to minimize water use as the water tank will be routinely refilled.

As another precautionary measure, the two water wells in Montezuma Creek, Utah have been pulled off-line. NTUA has pulled those systems off line until further notice. The water tanks are being refilled from regional ground water wells not directly connected to the San Juan River.

NTUA is actively part of regional response team working on the spill issue and is in direct contact with the Navajo Nation Emergency Management Response Team. NTUA will also provide periodic updates.

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